DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 174 589 SP 016 487

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TITLE A Framework for Building Effective, Comprehensive School Improvement and Staff Development Programs. A Process Model.
INSTITUTION California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento. Office of Program Evaluation and Research.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 34p.
AVAILABLE FROM Network for School Improvement, 926 J Street, Suite 1000, Sacramento, CA 95814 ($4.00)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Change Agents; Family School Relationship; Government School Relationship; *Improvement Programs; *Interinstitutional Cooperation; *Needs Assessment; Organization; Program Planning; School Community Relationship; *Staff Improvement

ABSTRACT

A process model is presented to provide an organized structure for improving schools and school staffs. In the model the school is the central focus, and it is seen in the context of related educational institutions, as part of a system that has interdependent parts. The components of this system are identified as: (1) the state; (2) the school district; (3) school personnel; (4) technical assistance and training resources available for school improvement; and (5) contributions possible from institutions of higher education. Within this outline process issues are explored; i.e., program initiation, development, implementation, and institutionalization. Collaborative and institutional issues are discussed. The components of a comprehensive improvement program are examined. (JD)

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A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE, COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

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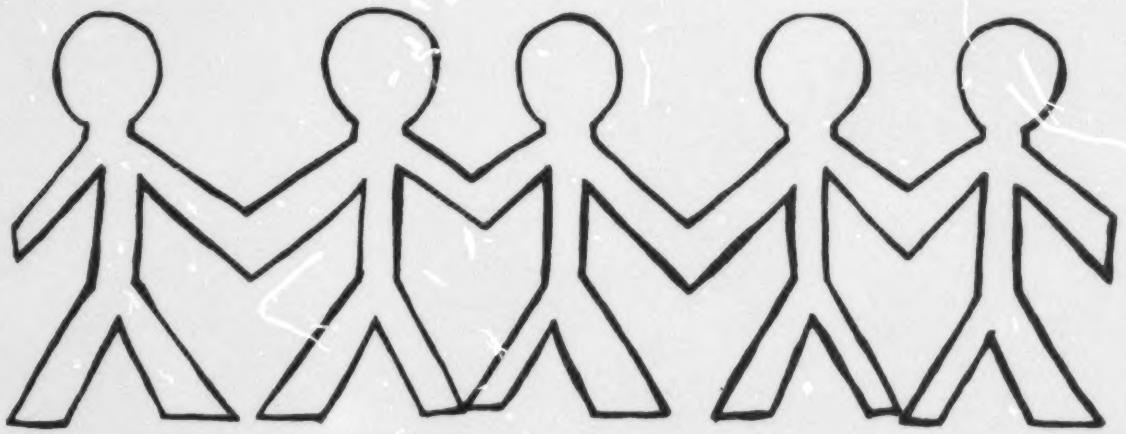
A PROCESS MODEL



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A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE, COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

A PROCESS MODEL

The improvement of public education is an important local, state and national issue. Educational accomplishment, particularly in an advanced technological and democratic society, is essential for personal, social and economic satisfaction. Large numbers of students, parents and community members feel that more learning could and should take place in our schools. Many school administrators and teachers believe that our educational system is not functioning as adequately as it might and that their professional levels of satisfaction and accomplishment have been declining in recent years.

Over the first two-thirds of this century, great strides were made to universalize education. Equality of educational opportunity also became a major pursuit. Constant progress toward these related goals, one effecting the total population and the other directed specifically at minority groups excluded from adequate educational opportunities, was made up through the 1960's.

In the present time frame, the United States is experiencing a most serious and prolonged decline in public school achievement First, the progress toward universalizing education and, perhaps, equalizing it has come to a virtual standstill. Consequently, one million high school students annually -- twenty-five percent (25%) of the entering high school class -- fail to complete school. Second, over the years the levels of achievement of lower income students, many of whom are non-white, has slowly and steadily increased but not at a rate considered adequate. Third, more than one million high school graduates leave school without attaining the level of proficiency or mastery sufficient to permit them to enter the mainstream of our technological workplace. Fourth, higher achieving upper grade pupils appear to have suffered a reduction of higher level skill competencies.

School reform and research programs, in a relative sense, flourished during the past two decades. While there have been a number of notable successes in school improvement, the total effort is not assessed enthusiastically. A similar assessment might be made of research programs particularly if they are measured by their utilization in schools beyond the experimental or demonstration setting.

To be certain, many advances have been made in research and development approaches directed toward improving teacher effectiveness, curricula and supporting materials. Yet, the average school or school district has little or no residue knowledge of research findings and how they might be applied to improve teaching, schooling and learning. Likewise, we have a certain amount of useful new information on the structure and organization of education and on successful change-agent approaches. In each of these areas we can be certain of one thing; widespread, effective dissemination and utilization of new educational research findings is about as absolute a failure as possible.

One consequence of the past two decades of school reform, with its uncertain results, and of the present decline in pupil achievement is a certain degree of disillusionment and malaise. It is not yet pervasive, but it does exist. If allowed to intensify and expand, it will have ominous implications for the future of public education in the United States.

Another characteristic of the current scene is a slow, and at times, hesitant search for new approaches. We appear to be moving from ad hoc, prescriptive grand strategies to individual and group-based developmental approaches. There is a greater reluctance to believe that "solutions" can be manufactured and pre-packaged at one location (a research institution or school setting) and subsequently picked up and dropped down on another location.

The exploration of new concepts and structures for building effective school improvement and staff development programs is not necessarily moving steadily, or without detour, toward approaches that appear to pos-

sess the best potential for success. Collaborative participation in needs assessment, establishing objectives, planning, implementing and evaluating programs is an important factor in program effectiveness. Yet, collaboration -- on a cooperative, equal basis -- among teachers, other school staff, administrators, state departments of education, colleges and universities, and other related resource institutions has not emerged as a priority among national leaders and organizations.

For instance, if the federal Teacher Center program, with its policy board composed of a majority of teachers, becomes a vehicle for increased participation and dominance, in contrast to increased participation and collaboration, it will probably result in less effective programs. Teachers and education will ultimately suffer a great setback if we all wake up five years from now and discover that what has been wrought from this program is an effort demanding great energy and dedication from teachers but evidencing no substantial long term impact on staff, schools or students. The consolation that the program was by teachers, for teachers and of teachers may be, under those circumstances, more devastating than useful.

To the extent that we seek to establish new structures for promoting, developing and implementing school improvement and staff development programs we direct our attention away from the only settings within which these tasks can be successfully pursued. These settings are schools, school districts, regional educational agencies, state agencies, professional associations, colleges and universities, special resource institutions and other existing line organizations that affect schools. Schools, districts, state agencies, colleges and universities can not build effective school improvement and staff development programs through surrogate entities. If we are serious about this task, we cannot avoid dealing with all the complexities and the intransigence of these institutions. They not only offer our best prospect for change and improvement but our only one.

Comprehensiveness is another issue that must receive careful attention. Our conception of what students need from school (in both personal and social terms), how learning occurs, what instructional strategies, curricula and supporting materials should be used to accomplish what purposes, how time and different learning formats can best be used, and what administrators, teachers, resource personnel, other staff, parents, community members and students need to do in order to learn and grow together must be explored. Such an examination is necessary for building a long-term, collaborative organizational approach for developing effective, comprehensive school improvement and staff development programs. To do this in a process that enhances our collective capacity for success, we must assure that we support this effort by the best that research and development have to offer.

Collaborative governance approaches; building programs that are directed at existing school organizations: schools, school districts, regional and state agencies, colleges and universities and other institutions; and building processes for the ongoing development of activities and technologies responsive to the unique attributes of a school and those who populate it represent important factors in a process model for staff development.

While the issues of governance, organizational change, effective methods, and comprehensiveness are being examined: legislatures, professional associations, school districts, colleges and universities and others involved in public education feel compelled to take some positive action. The establishment of proficiency standards, teacher centers, "competency" based training and "basic skills" all represent efforts to respond to internal and external needs. Each of these approaches, however, have characteristics of old wine in new bottles. Yet, they do demonstrate a commitment and action to move toward the development of school improvement and staff development programs.

What we would benefit most from at this particular juncture is a set of alternative models for school improvement and staff development. These models should be systematically grounded and comprehensive. They should not stand as new grand strategies but as frameworks around which we can initiate a discussion of alternatives.

This model is offered in that spirit. It draws upon: extensive legislative, programatic and policy discussions of the California School Improvement, Local School Site Staff Development and School Resource Center programs; *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change* (Berman and McLaughlin, Rand

Corporation/1978); *Involvement: A Study of Shared Governance of Teacher Education* (Joyce, Editor, a report of the National Urban/Rural School Development Program/1978); other federal and state programs; and works such as *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change* (Sarason/1971). Of particular importance are the insights and experiences culled from literally hundreds of discussions with administrators, teachers, parents, students and others who are working together building school improvement and staff development programs.

THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In 1977, two nationally siginificant school reform laws were passed by the California Legislature and signed by the Governor. Four themes characterize these laws. First, school improvement should be the product of a collaborative school site effort that includes the principal, teachers, other school staff, parents, community members and students in an equal partnership. Second, staff development programs should be based upon staff and student needs as identified through this collaborative effort and the inservice activities should be developed and implemented by a staff council with teachers being in a majority. Third, school site improvement and staff development programs should be supported by a regional network of resources. Fourth, rather than being "experimental", these programs should be founded on an ongoing commitment to school improvement.

The School Improvement Program is a nonprescriptive, developmental effort funded at a three-year level of $400 million dollars. Approximately 3,700 school sites are involved in this effort (about 3,500 elementary and 300 secondary schools).

The program requires the establishment of a school site council composed of staff (the principal, classroom teachers and other staff with teachers in the majority) and an equal number of parents, community members and, in secondary schools, students. This council is responsible for:

- Assessing school needs;
- Developing improvement objectives;
- Planning a three-year program;
- Reviewing implementation;
- Evaluating and modifying the program;
- Establishing the budget;
- Meeting and confering with the School Board

The school staff, with a majority being teachers, must design and implement instructional techniques and staff development activities responsive to objectives established by the council:

The three-year school improvement and staff development program must include:

1. Curricula;
2. Instructional Strategies; and
3. Supporting Materials

which are responsive to the individual educational needs and learning styles of each pupil and which enable all pupils to:

   a. Make continuous progress and learn at a rate appropriate to their abilities;
   b. Master basic skills in language development and reading, writing, and mathematics;
   c. Develop knowledge and skills in other aspects of the curriculum such as arts and humanities; physical, natural and social sciences multicultural education; physical, emotional and mental health; consumer economics; and career education;
   d. Pursue educational interests and develop esteem for self and others personal and social responsibility critical thinking and independent judgement.

4. Instructional and auxiliary services to meet the special needs of:
   a. Non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking pupils, including instruction in a language such pupils understand;
   b. Educationally disadvantaged pupils
   c. Pupils with exceptional abilities or needs.
5. Improvement of classroom and school environments, including improvement of relationships between and among students, school personnel, parents, and the community, and the reduction of the incidence among pupils of violence and vandalism;
6. Other objectives established by the School Site Council;
7. Special elementary and secondary objectives;
8. Improvement of the capacity of school personnel to implement the school improvement plan; and
9. Increasing the capacity of the school site council to monitor and evaluate the school improvement plan.

A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE, COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

A PROCESS MODEL

A compilation of research reports, school studies, evaluations and experiences provide extensive support for the following principles:

1. Successful school improvement programs require the existence of effective staff development programs;

2. Effective staff development programs are related to school site improvement activities;

3. Successful school improvement and staff development programs require the ongoing involvement of the participants in planning, implementation and evaluation activities;

4. School leaders -- board members, superintendents, administrators, teachers, other staff, parents and students -- all have interdependent roles to play. Each participant is critical to success. Significant numbers of each group must be committed to the effort before it is undertaken;

5. The school improvement and staff development activities should, over a period of years, be part of a single, concerted, continuous and comprehensive effort that addresses the total continuum, or ecology, of schooling;

6. The state department of education, regional resource agency and school district must provide technical assistance and support to the local school site. This support should be in the form of leadership, authority, validation and legitimacy for this process. The technical assistance must be directed at supporting and building capacities at the school site to carry out their program.

7. Research information on organizational and technological components of schooling must be compiled, translated into useful form, and effectively disseminated;

8. A professional development continuum must be established to bridge the gaps between (a) formal academic preparation and job demands, and (b) continuing education for the professional as an individual and for school site staff as a group;

9. In terms of fostering success in school improvement and staff development efforts; *how* it is done is more important than what is done. The *how* is essentially a new approach to participation within which professionals and community involve themselves in an ongoing problem-solving process;

10. This process must receive adequate funding. Although finances, in and of themselves, are unrelated to success; they do make it possible to pursue staffing and training patterns heretofore unavailable.

On the basis of these principles we have contructed a simple model:

A. The State
   1. School District
      (a) School Board
      (b) Superintendent
      (c) Central Office
   2. School Site
      (a) Principal
      (b) Teachers
      (c) Other Staff
      (d) Parents
      (e) Community
      (f) Students
   3. Regional Resource Agency

B. Technical Assistance and Training Resource System
   1. Regional Resource Agency
   2. Colleges and Universities
   3. Special Resource and Technical Assistance Centers
   4. Other Sources
   5. State Department of Education
   6. School Districts
   7. School Site Personnel

C. Institutions of Higher Education

D. A Framework for Comprehensive Programs

Within this outline we explore process issues (program initiation, development, implementation and institutionalization); collaborative and institutional issues; and, briefly, the components of a comprehensive program.

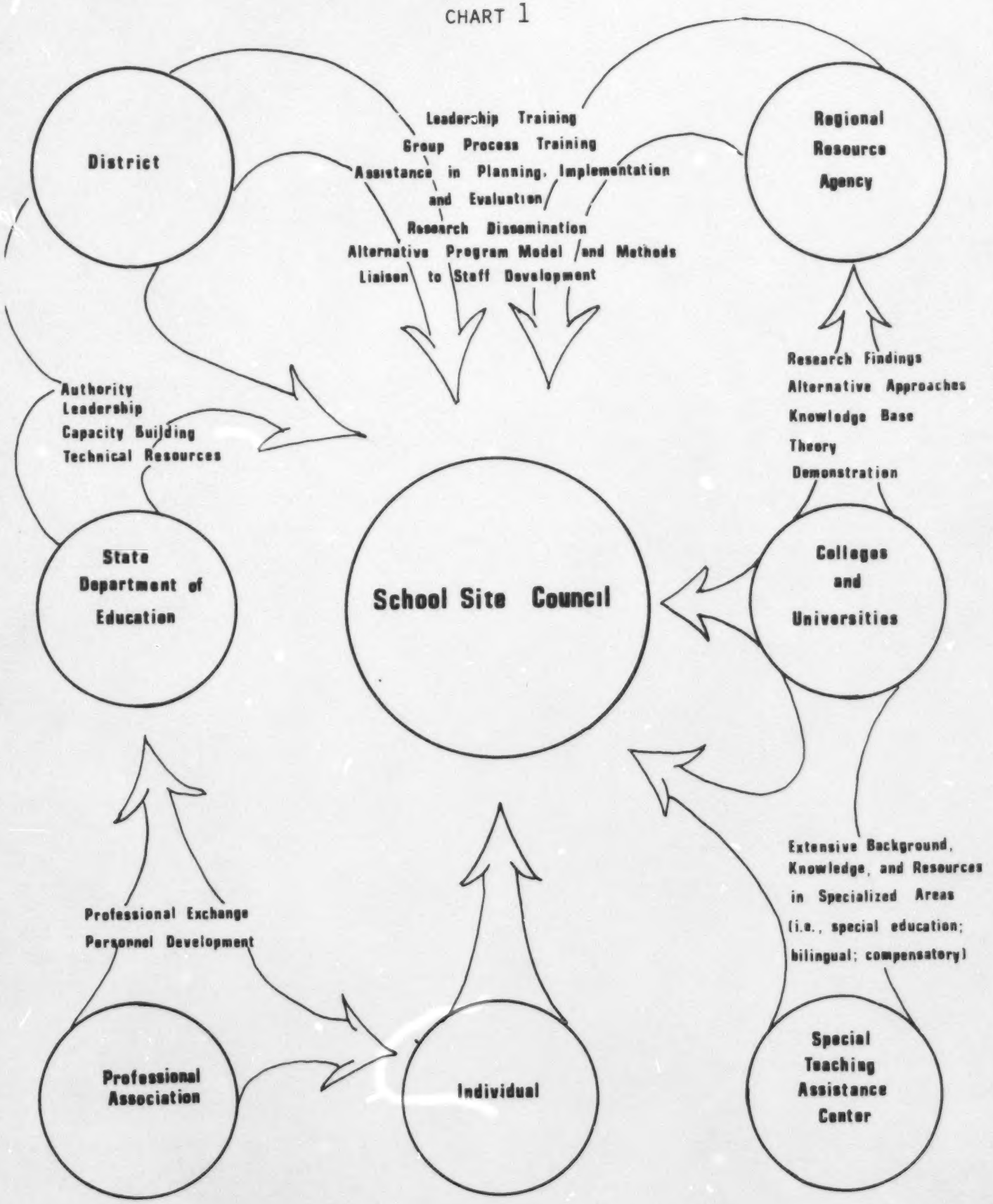
THE STATE

Schools are an entity of the state government. Through legislation and regulation, state government delegates authority for the operation of schools to districts within their jurisdiction. In the United States, some 16,500 school districts are responsible for the operations of 65,000 elementary and 26,000 secondary schools. We believe that virtually every school district could implement the model we are outlining without additional legislative authority. At the state level, however, usage of this approach would require legislation. It is doubtful that very many, if any, legislatures have granted state school boards or state superintendents discretionary authority that would permit regulating such an approach into being.

State legislation is the appropriate mechanism for comprehensive program approaches, given that the ultimate authority for schools rests with the state legislature. Legislation provides authority, legitimacy and leadership. It should also include evidence that the program will be continuous -- for at least a specified period of time (a minimum of five years and more appropriately perpetually) -- and contain financing appropriate to the operations authorized.

The State Department of Education has primary roles as administrator, leader, capacity-builder, resource disseminator, channel to national agencies and institutions, supporter, monitor and evaluator. It must develop an ability to integrate its field services (compensatory education, bilingual, migrant, special education, mentally-gifted minors, vocational education, etc.) so that districts and school can end the piece-meal approach to meeting special needs of children and build comprehensive, integrated programs that fully meet all of the purposes and requirements of "categoricals". The federal government bears a major legislative and regulatory obligation to see that such an approach becomes possible. "Categoricals" are important programs, they must be preserved if we are to make progress in meeting the special needs of students, but it is equally important that we begin to fashion approaches permitting schools to operate in the

CHART 1


District
Regional Resource Agency
Leadership Training
Group Process Training
Assistance in Planning, Implementation and Evaluation
Research Dissemination
Alternative Program Model and Methods
Liaison to Staff Development
Authority
Leadership
Capacity Building
Technical Resources
Research Findings
Alternative Approaches
Knowledge Base
Theory
Demonstration
State Department of Education
School Site Council
Colleges and Universities
Professional Exchange
Personnel Development
Extensive Background, Knowledge, and Resources in Specialized Areas (i.e., special education; bilingual; compensatory)
Professional Association
Individual
Special Teaching Assistance Center

most effective and efficient way possible. The myriad of different requirements, few of which promote accountability, only inhibit efforts designed to build successful programs. Multiple committees, different reporting, accounting and guidelines, if not absolutely critical to the programs' central purpose, should be consolidated. Rules and regulations must be amended to permit flexibility in designing local approaches that fit unique situations but still adhere to program purposes and goals.

In pursuing these approaches, the State Department of Education should be a major cooperative force. It should be a resource link between schools, school districts and sources of information about educational techniques, organizational processes, and structural approaches that offer alternatives useful in building local programs. Leadership, expertise and cooperation must become the bonding agent between the state and local educational entities.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The school site is the focal point of this model. Few school sites are capable of developing successful school improvement and staff development programs without the leadership and support of the school district. Even the best school programs will eventually disappear, as personnel, parents and students change, without the school district conconstantly nurturing and promoting the site.

The critical element will be the quality of leadership and support the school receives from the school board, the superintendent and central office staff. Permitting the local school to develop its own program requires tolerance, an understanding that local capacity-building will take time (and must be constantly re-enforced), a recognition that problem-solving is a process that causes periodic discomfort and controversy and also the understanding that improvements and programs not understood, accepted, strongly felt about, and part of the site just simply do not function effectively.

The superintendent must feel that this program is an important part of the district's priorities and, together with the school board, assure that all the participants recognize that fact. Principals will need assistance in preparing themselves for collaborative governance, in rethinking their roles, and establishing new standards for their relationship with the district. Teachers, other staff, parents, community members and students will all need encouragement, time and support for their participation in identifying the purposes, needs, resources and programs that will be developed at their site

to improve instructional, curricula, materials and other components of schooling. Staff development activities and program development efforts must be made a part of the regular school operations. Strong superintendent and board leadership is required to support these new roles.

Many districts have consultants and specialists that function across a wide range of educational areas. In small districts or rural areas, there is usually a regional agency responsible for providing consultants. Often times, the State Department of Education has field staff members that function similarly. The areas might include:

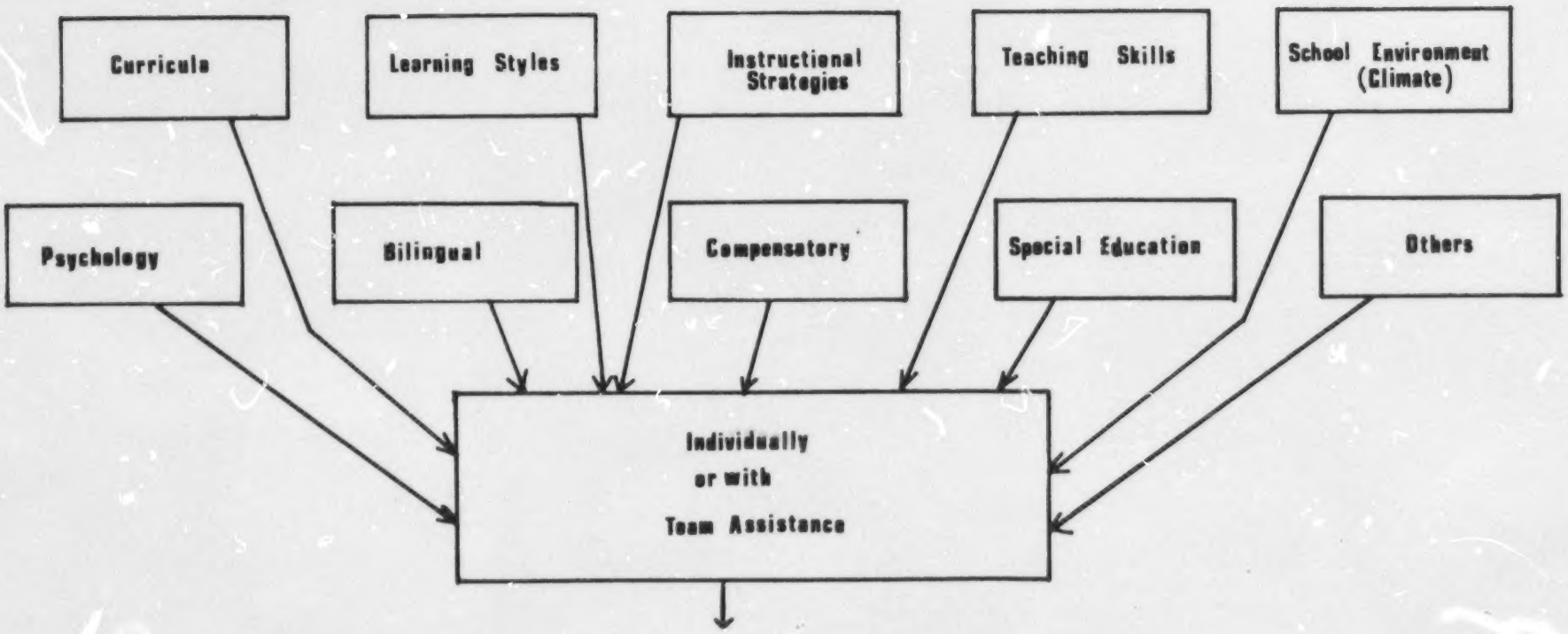
Curricula
(Reading, mathematics, language arts, health education, science, English, arts, foreign languages, social studies, physical education, and other subject areas)

Instructional Strategies	Teaching Skills
Learning Styles	Psychology
Exceptional Children	Physically Handicapped
Early Childhood	Career Education
Evaluation	Research and Development
Health Services	Compensatory Education
Individualized Instruction	Group Instruction
Libraries	Bilingual-Bicultural
Multicultural	Instructional Media
Vocational Education	Learning Handicapped
Community Involvement	Planning
Needs Assessment	Diagnostic Services
Intergroup Programs	Management

Many school site personnel also possess exemplary capabilities in some of these areas. It will be necessary to mobilize these resources into a force capable of providing: leadership training; the identification of program alternatives; planning and program development assistance; training in the establishment of staff development programs; knowledge of research findings and how they might be made applicable to program development efforts; and sources of direct training.

As this network of available specialists is developed from central office staff, school personnel, regional resource agencies, special resource and technical assistance centers, the state department of education, colleges and universities, and other sources, it will be necessary to think through the best approaches for providing consultant assistance and services to the local school sites. The sites will need general programs that build their own knowledge base, materials that they can obtain and use at their schools, training to strengthen their capabilities to implement and carry out particular programs,

CHART 2



THE SCHOOL SITE

Leadership Training

Program Development

Staff Development

Building Knowledge Base

Planning, Implementation, Evaluation

on-site help and other assistance. This network will need a development program of its own to strengthen and expand the assistance it is capable of providing. The precise structure of such a network -- school clusters, district, regional or state -- will depend upon local circumstances. It should be cooperative and capable of consistently improving the quality and quantity of services it can provide. It must be made clear that the working mode of this network -- either individually or in teams -- must be characterized by shared values and an equal cooperative partnership with the school site.

Many people believe that the school system is tightly controlled, that all school practices are intended, and that they must adjust themselves to these realities. This is an extreme view. The school system is a large bureaucracy with traditions, patterns of action and a history. These factors produce stability but also create obstacles to change and improvement. However, effective school leaders can foster personal and organizational development. They also know that it is impossible to build effective school site programs unless the district provides a climate for improvement, and the leadership, support mechanisms and authority to make it happen.

THE SCHOOL SITE

This model posits the school as the front line of change. It anchors the change process in school site relationships:

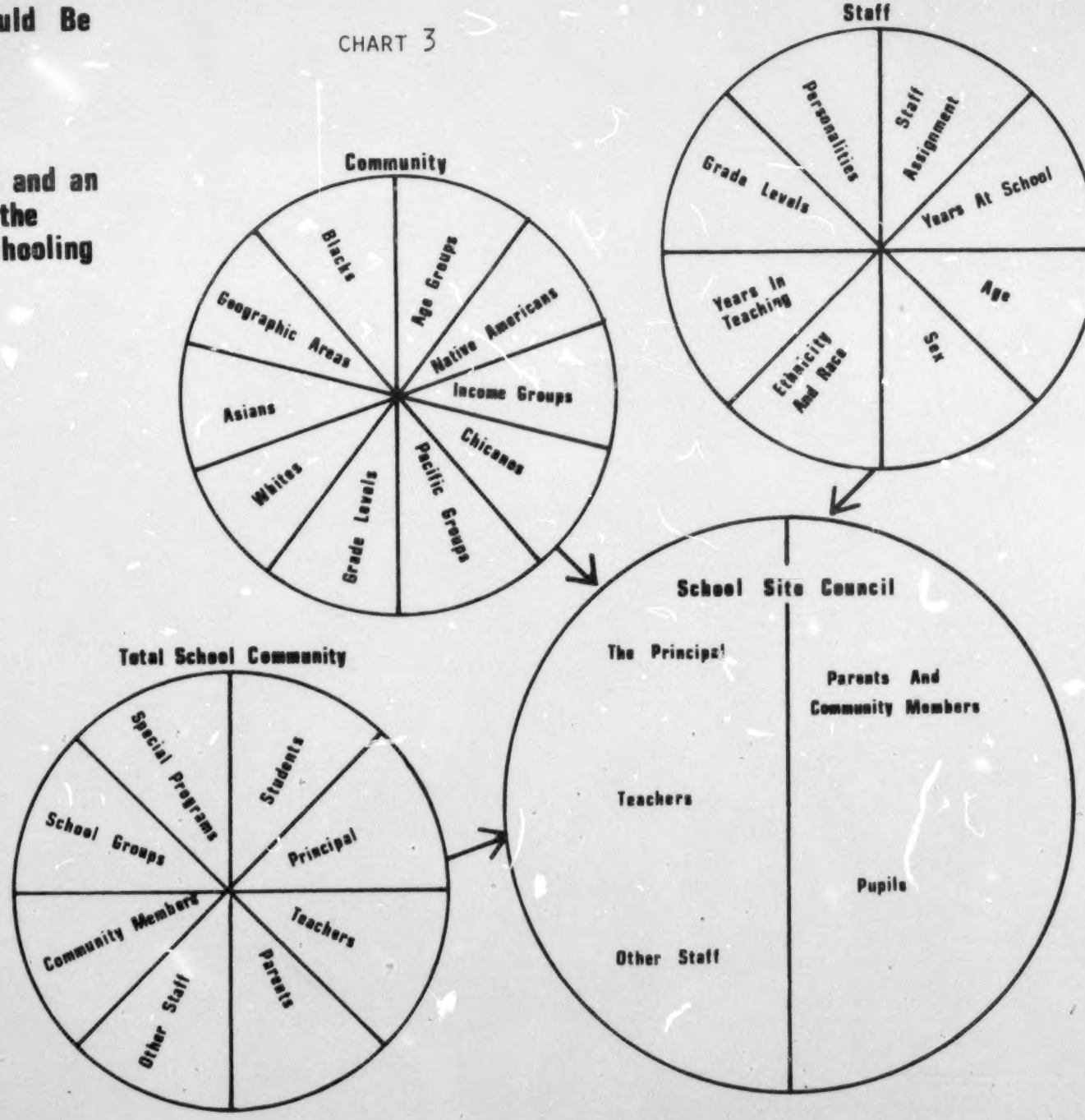
1. The principal to teachers, other staff, parents, community and students;
2. Teachers to each other and to the principal, other staff, parents, community and students;
3. Parents, community and students to principal and teachers and to each other and other staff;
4. Other staff to the principal, teachers, parents, community and students.

Each of the above relationships is modified by building a collaborative process for problem-solving, program development and the establishment of school improvement and staff development activities. The vehicle for these new relationships is a School Site Council responsible for program planning, implementation, evaluation and budgeting.

The Council Should Be

- Representative
- Collaborative
- Decision-Making and an
- Integral Part of the School and Schooling

CHART 3



This council operates on a parity principle with equal numbers of staff and non-staff, in a joint and equal decision-making capacity; and new partnerships between administrators and staff, staff and other staff, amd among administrators, staff, parents, community and students.

The participants of the school site council, with the exception of the principal, are selected by the groups they represent. The staff half of the council includes, in addition to the principal and other staff members, a majority of teachers. The community half is composed of equal numbers of parents and students and any community members they choose (parents select parents, students select students).

THE PRINCIPAL

At the school site the principal is the "gatekeeper of change".[1] Only through effective principal leadership in providing a cooperative working team environment and legitimacy can the improvement process work.

In managing their schools, principals often find themselves consumed by tasks best described as housekeeping, clerking, mediating, and public relations. For some, the ultimate job criteria is the management of conflict, or more bluntly, assuring that the central office is not "bothered" by the school. To the extent that the principal internalize these roles, his or her role as change agent is diminished.

Even if the principal does not internalize these roles, he or she has probably had little, if any, training as a change agent. The knowledge and expertise required to build comprehensive programs, or special programs such as bilingual education, is very different from that which the principal may have experienced. Without an experiential base, and faced with a system that does not encourage diversity, the principal may be very reluctant to pursue an improvement program.

Most principals know what good education is and how a school should function. Building strong cooperative working relationships is almost an article of the position. What the principal must confront is why he or she should share the management of the school in

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[1]Berman and McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, pg. 31

the way envisioned by this model.

The answer lies both in the hard realities of schools as they exist, and a realistic appraisal of how schools can come to function effectively to educate all students.

Many schools do not exhibit the working relationships, resources, community support, and parental and student partnerships necessary to build effective, comprehensive school improvement and staff development programs.

Principals cannot "tell" teachers to improve, they cannot "will" student achievement, school-home partnerships or any of the conditions that are necessary to build effective programs. They can initiate and foster a process that has potential for successful schooling. If principals initiate such a process, they are not "sharing their power" with the council (or staff, or community) but enhancing their own power and accomplishing desirable ends not otherwise possible.

Most principals could move their school toward this process without state or district authority. Some schools function with many of the attributes described here. However, to build a system with the prospect of long-term, effective change it will be necessary to promote state, regional, and district change as well as school improvement.

Under the proposed model, staff development activities for teachers, including development of instructional approaches, curricula and supporting materials, are to be undertaken by committees composed of the principal, teachers, other staff, and parents, with teachers in the majority. These activities and materials are developed pursuant to council objectives and are to be submitted to the council for inclusion in the school plan. Staff development activities developed for administrators and other staff are the product of committees in which those groups are a majority. Likewise, parent/community education programs are developed by committees in which parents are a majority but on which administrators, teachers and students sit. The size of any one committee may vary but each committee should include five or six members. The precise structure and membership of committees is to be determined by the school council. Our purpose in providing the above description is for illustrative purposes. We simply wish to demonstrate a collaborative process that brings together professionals and lay persons, while maintaining their respective integrity.

Several prerequistes exist for successful school site programs. They are:

1. The leadership of the principal;
2. The quality of the working relationships among staff;
3. The extent to which the council, and the larger school community, can develop an environment of tolerance, respect, mutual understanding, support, security, team building and consensus;
4. The belief that common goals and objectives can be forced and that successful school improvement and staff development activities will make a difference in the quality of education available to students;
5. The participation of a significant number of staff and community members in this effort; and
6. Time.

TEACHERS

Teachers are the instruments of change and improvement in schools. Any program that promotes school improvement and staff development must begin where teachers (as a group) are and collaborate with them to increase their motivation and promote their capacities.

Many schools do not provide intellectual stimulation or professional growth for teachers. Nor do these schools promote relationships which allow teachers, students, administrators, and parents to grow and develop together.

There are few professional roles as demanding as teaching. Teaching is both a thoroughly personal and a cooperative process. If schools are not exciting places to work, it is difficult for teachers to muster the intellectual and emotional energy necessary to make learning an exciting process. If parents, students and the community do not feel they are involved in a partnership that is mutually beneficial, and in which they share interdependent roles and responsibilities, schools will probably not function successfully. Under such circumstances, teaching is not a highly satisfying profession.

Yet, teachers can and do rise to the challenge. In schools that have successfully pursued change, the more teachers were asked to do, the more likely they were to respond

positively and with success. In these schools, clarity of purpose, collaboration and meaningful participation combine to encourage teachers to improve education.

This model recognizes teaching as a challenging, exciting pursuit that necessitates a cooperative work setting. It places no limits on the different capabilities and talents that teachers can bring to the individual needs and learning styles of children. It envisions alternative learning formats, instructional strategies, curricula and materials organized to permit staff, community, parents and students to use and expand their talents in ways that are mutually rich and satisfying. It also recognizes that the participants at a particular site are the ones who can best determine how to function together. Their energy, spirit and capabilities should determine the nature of the school and their interactions within it.

OTHER STAFF

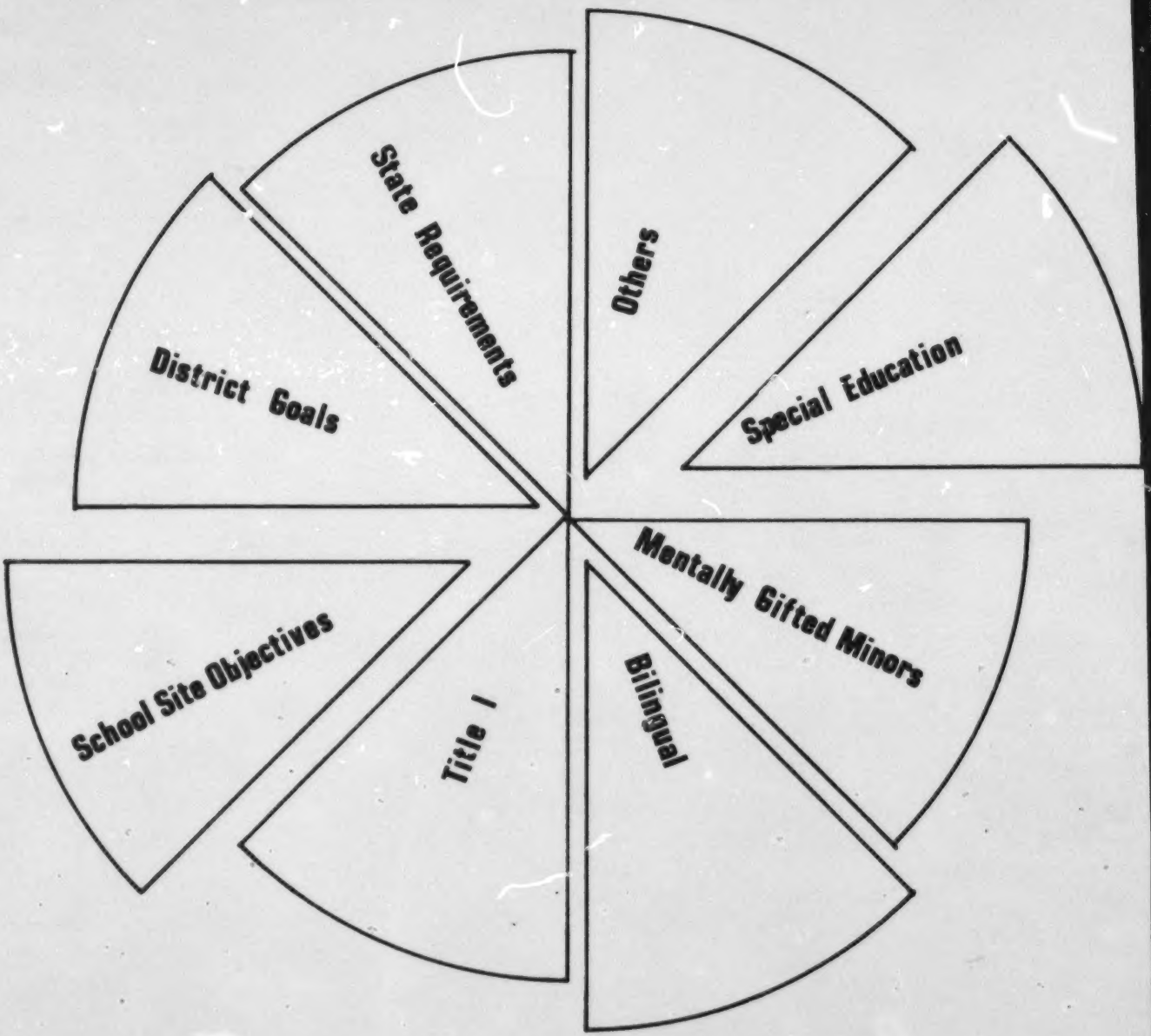
"Self-contained classroom" perpetuates the myth that all education occurs at the school site. Education is a pervasive process that occurs inside and outside the classroom, as well it should. Other school staff manifest this fact. Specialists in reading, speech and hearing, curriculum, mathematics or writing are often seen as appendages to the schooling process who must be tolerated. Non-teaching staff, like the bus driver who is with children for up to two hours a day may also be "on the outside". Instead, other school members should be seen as an integral part of the education program. There is real and potential overlap between the learning activities provided by teachers and those provided by other staff. Thus, building a continuum between all school site education activities and outside learning experiences is an important task. This task can only be accomplished in a setting that promotes cooperation and program planning.

PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Schools cannot succeed without the joint participation of administrators, teachers, other staff, students, community and parents. Learning cannot be done to or for us. Education takes place in a variety of settings. Schools should support the learning that takes place at home and in the community, to the extent that it meets student needs. The home should support the learning schools are designed to foster. To do this a partnership must be formed.

AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL SITE PROGRAM

CHART 4



Parents and students are important members of the school site council and the school community. School improvement and staff development programs with community participation appear to be more successful in promoting change than those without such participation. The school partnership is two-fold. First, there is the task of determining the goals of schooling, approaches for improving the school, staff development and parent education activities that support improvement, and the evaluation of school programs and results. Second, administrators, teachers, parents and students must join together to develop an educational process that adequately meets the needs of each student. Only through this type of partnership can we be assured that all students will have opportuniti to achieve all that they are capable of becoming.

School site councils that include parents and students can be successful. Equal decision-making between staff and community does result in better programs. This was certainly evidenced in The National Urban/Rural School Development Program:

> "Most important, the councils which achieved the greatest degree of equality between school and community persons generated the most active, responsive, and diverse inservice teacher education programs. Imbalance in either direction (school over community or community over school) reduced either program quality, breadth of clients, or relevance to local problems." Furthermore, "The effect of participation seems to have been to reduce alienation and to increase the feelings of efficacy among community members and professionals alike. The more the participants were involved in the planning process, the greater were their feelings of integrativeness toward other groups and the greater their perceptions of project impact on their local situation."[2]

REGIONAL RESOURCE AGENCY

In identifying the school site as central to school improvement, we see relationships between individuals and groups as the heart of the educational process. However, we recognize that improvement cannot occur without changing the institutions within which these relationships take place. The school will need to identify sources of support in addition to the district. One such source is the regional resource agency.

Multiple sources of support and re-enforcement are useful because; (1) energy and efforts need to be sustained by a variety of sources; (2) participants from a regional agency will be free of some of the constraints that districts face. The regional

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[2]Bruce Joyce in "Involvement: A Study of Shared Governance of Teacher Education", pp 8-9

agency should organize persons from a wide variety of role groups (e.g. college professors, teachers, administrators, specialists from a variety of curriculum area) to support the efforts of schools to plan for and implement change. Through such a system, relationships which foster school site improvement can be regularized and nurtured.

THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING RESOURCE SYSTEM

Coordination and quality control of technical assistance and training services across a state education system is typically impeded by several factors: fragmentation of service units, lack of criteria for quality control, and the absence of mechanisms to affect coordination and make quality control judgements. Typically, federal dissemination projects exist side-by-side with local and regional resource centers, IHEs, and professional associations, with a great deal of duplication in services available and great variations in quality of services. Moreover, these entities generally must justify their continued existence to different funding sources which have different goals. As a result, there is little incentive to collaborate and coordinate services.

Chart 1 describes the technical assistance and training resource system. The system is designed to provide an array of resources and services which are deemed critical to effective school improvement, including: leadership training; group process training; training in instructional skills and strategies; planning, implementation and evaluation development assistance, research dissemination; alternative program models amd methods; and general liaison between participating agencies and school sites.

The school site is at the core of the system. Arrayed around the school site are the agencies and institutions that would join together to provide coordinated services of a high quality. These agencies and institutions include: IHEs, regional resource centers (e.g. state intermediate service units such as California's County Offices of Education or New York's Boards of Cooperative Educational Services); school district central offices; state departments of education; special purpose resource and technical assistance centers (e.g. Lau bilingual education centers); and professional associations.

These agencies and institutions would come together through two mechanisms. First, a State Council on Technical Assistance and Staff Development would be created through legislation. Second, Regional Councils for technical assistance and staff development are to be established.

The State Council should be established in legislation and include representatives of IHE's, the State Department of Education, professional educators' associations, regional resource centers, special purpose technical assistance centers, school districts and local schools. The State Council would have three major functions:

(1) to build a system of regional technical assistance and staff development councils (with membership analagous to the State Council) throughout the state; (2) to establish mechanisms to deliver coordinated technical assistance and training services to school sites (in developing this function, the Council would review the technical assistance and training budgets of participating agencies and institutions); and (3) to develop and implement criteria for quality control of technical assistance and training services.

THE IHE ROLE IN INSERVICE EDUCATION

Education is characterized by the interaction (or lack of same) of three "systems". For purposes of this model, these shall be called ADMINISTRATIVE, SUPPORT, AND TEACHING/LEARNING. (See Chart 5 for a schematic representation of these systems.)

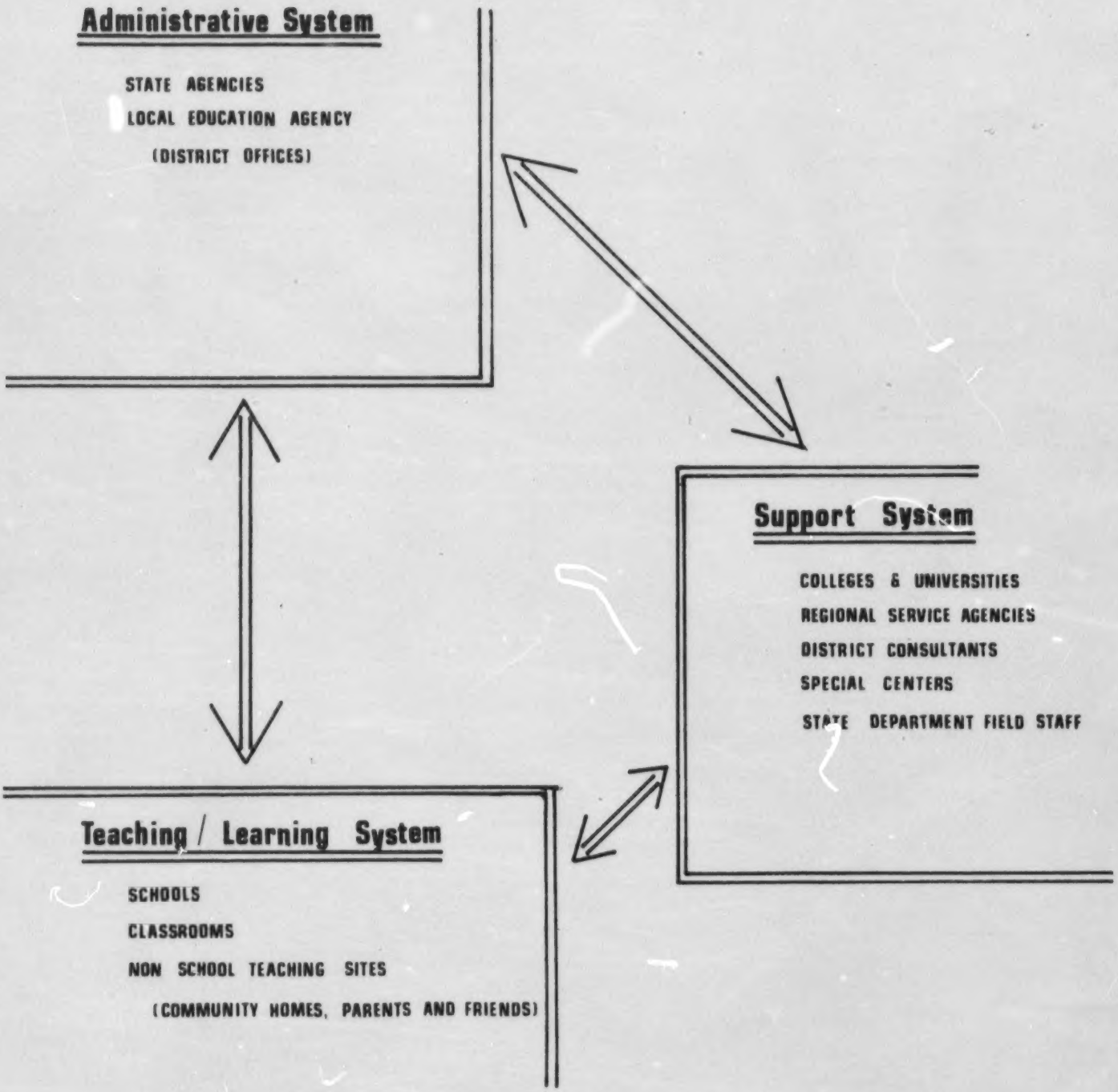
Provision of effective inservice education has suffered from inadequate coordination and interaction within and across these three "systems". Effective legislated approaches to school improvement and staff development address the problem of coordinating across these "systems". Previous approaches to legislating and managing large-scale educational reform emphasized the need for administrative control (e. g., rigid regulation, funding without provision for local choice of priorities, lack of incentives for effective performance). Newer, more effective models concentrate on improvement through local choice of priorities; shared responsibility among administrative, support, and teaching/learning "systems"; and meaningful fiscal incentives provided not for a one-time "demonstration", but for a continuing effort to improve school programs.

To date, however, these models have not addressed the need to effectively link the IHE role in inservice education to other elements of the Support "system", or to the Administrative and Teaching/Learning "systems". This seems to have been true for a number of reasons.

First, colleges and universities have traditionally resisted legislation to intimately link postsecondary education with elementary and secondary education presumbably because such linkages seemed demeaning to them. Examples of this are the virtual removal of responsibility for higher education from the New York State Department of Education in the late 1950's and early 1960's in favor of creating a separate higher education board and administering agency; and the removal from the California State Department of Education of responsibility for Community Colleges and Teacher Preparation and Licensing in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Second, when teacher preparation seemed the major priority during the 1960's, there was little real incentive for government to meaningfully address needs for effective inservice education. Colleges and universities were "priming the pump" by turning out large numbers of new teachers, and this seemed to be a sufficient role for them to play.

CHART 5


Administrative System
STATE AGENCIES
LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY
(DISTRICT OFFICES)
Support System
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES
DISTRICT CONSULTANTS
SPECIAL CENTERS
STATE DEPARTMENT FIELD STAFF
Teaching / Learning System
SCHOOLS
CLASSROOMS
NON SCHOOL TEACHING SITES
(COMMUNITY HOMES, PARENTS AND FRIENDS)

Finally, before the mid-1960's there were far fewer demands for the kinds of specialized knowledge and skills that teachers now must possess. With the advent of programs for the disadvantaged and for limited and non-English speaking students, a vast expansion in special education programs, and an enormous increase in the availability of research and development in education, the need for specialized training and the availability of research-based approaches have increased markedly.

DEFINING THE IHE ROLE

The IHE role in inservice education must flow naturally from IHE preservice education responsibilities. Preservice training programs should be carefully coordinated with inservice training opportunities which should be available throughout a teacher's career. Research should determine those skills needed by entering teachers and by teachers with, for example, two, five and ten years' experience. Development of preservice and inservice programs could then be coordinated through an understanding of the skill needs of teachers at different points in their careers.

Assuming a carefully developed linkage between preservice and inservice opportunities, the IHE role in inservice education must be characterized by meaningful investment and involvement in the elementary/secondary education improvement support system. Such involvement might include the following elements:

1. A repository for educational research information with various IHE programs "specializing" in various education problem or issue areas.
2. Centers for translating research into practical, timely training approaches geared to solving practicioners' problems by improving their skills.
3. Consultants and facilitators for local districts and schools in framing approaches to school improvement and staff development.
4. "Training of Trainers" who can return to local districts and schools to provide ongoing training and assistance to local faculties.

PUTTING NEW IHE ROLES IN PLACE

Building a new IHE role in inservice education will require:

- Shared IHE accountability and responsibility as part of a support system.
- Fiscal and programatic incentives for IHE to be interactive (rather than reactive) with administrative and teaching/learning systems.
- Mechanisms for coordination with other elements in the support system.

The first two elements above are difficult to disentagle. Like proverbial good intentions responsibility and commitment to support improvement in elementary and secondary education are difficult to "legislate". The needs and problems of public schools are probably more extensive than they have ever been. With these needs and problems come real challenges which all but cry out for effective research and training approaches. It is these challenges which should provide incentives for IHE personnel to get involved in the life of the schools.

However, we must face the fact that it is more appealing to teach in a university than to delve into the day-to-day life of an elementary or secondary school; and it is probably more gratifying to delve deeply into a narrowly-focused research project that is of academic interest but of little practical value to a classroom teacher. Thus, specific fiscal and programatic incentives should be provided to inspire IHEs to build closer linkages with other elements of the support system, and with the schools.

The organization of schools of education, the difficulty of structuring field services responsive to districts and schools, prestige and promotional realities of university life, and related factors often inhibit building a direct and supportive relationship between schools of education and public schools.

These issues, and the issue of public funding for field research, program development, dissemination and inservice education, deserve careful study. Schools of education are important parts of our educational system. We should seek to maximize the resources and capabilities of institutions of higher education to bring them directly into the public education system.

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

BACKGROUND

School programs have increasingly suffered from fragmented approaches to institutional change and problem solving. The rapid increase in federal and state categorical programs since the mid-1960's has provided badly-needed resources to address special educational needs. At the same time, these programs, with their discrete funding formulas, regulations and guidelines have produced confusion among school site personnel as to effective ways to tie them all together to achieve a comprehensive approach to school improvement.[1] Clearly, an integrated program of school improvement must take into account all of the needs and available resources that bear on the life of the school. Categorical programs, teaching strategies, curriculum approaches, and student needs cannot compete with one another for attention or emphasis within the school; instead, these elements in the ecology of the school must complement and support each other if meaningful improvement is to be attempted.

THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/STAFF DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Chart 6 below describes a framework for building effective, comprehensive school improvement and staff development programs.[2] The framework incorporates the elements of school improvement and staff development described earlier in this paper, but places them in a schematic that describes the linkages among the elements that will foster comprehensiveness. As can be seen, the inner circle incorporates those elements that are central to the teaching/learning process: student needs, including pupils with special needs; instructional strategies; teaching skills; basic skills; curricula and materials; and school site staff. Thus the core of the school's life is distinctly student-centered.

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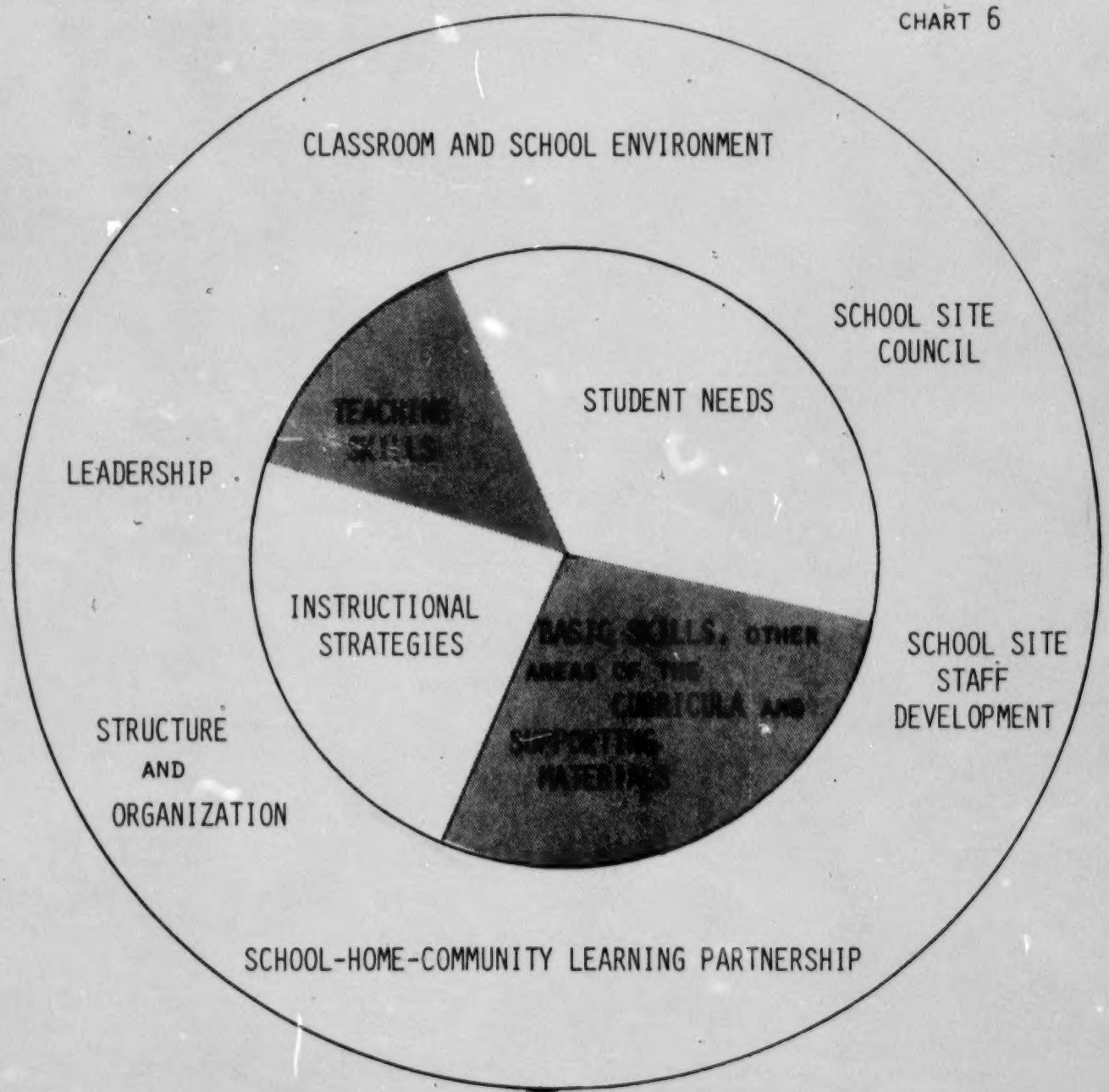
[1] See, for example, Joyce, et. al. "Recommendations for the Evaluation of Staff Development in California: Report of a Preparatory Study." Sacramento: California State Department of Education, in press.

[2] Birdsall, "A Framework for Building Comprehensive School Improvement and Staff Development Programs" and Birdsall/Nur, "Planning for School Improvement and Staff Development: A Guide for School Councils and Groups", The California Staff Development Network, Sacramento, California.

PARENTS--TEACHERS--SCHOOL BOARD--ADMINISTRATORS--STUDENTS--OTHER STAFF

CHART 6



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING RESOURCE SYSTEM

1. LEADERSHIP TRAINING
2. TRAINING IN PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION
3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
4. RESEARCH DISSEMINATION
5. ALTERNATIVES FOR PROGRAM DESIGN AND ADOPTION
6. MANAGEMENT TRAINING
7. [illegible] COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The outer circle describes those critical elements that bear on the ecology of the school and classroom. These are: classroom and school environment; school site council; school structure and organization; and school/home/community learning partnerships. All of these elements are characterized by their importance in the teaching/learning process by providing support for staff and students engaged in that process.

Finally, the framework describes those influences and resources that can, for better or worse, affect school improvement from a greater distance. The arrow at the top of the chart displays the general beliefs, perceptions, and feelings of parents, teachers, school board members, administrators, students and other staff within a community toward a school. Positive beliefs and feelings toward a school can greatly enhance the motivation of staff and students working in the school. Conversely, negative beliefs and feelings can easily destroy motivation toward school improvement. Building support among these community-wide forces is a key reason why school improvement and staff development programs were not conceived of as "categorical", "demonstration", or "pilot" programs, which are expressly limited to one or two schools within a school district, or to one or two grades within a school. Instead, <u>all</u> schools within a district are carefully scheduled by the district to phase into school improvement over time.

The large arrow at the bottom of the chart describes the technical assistance and supporting resources which must be made available to a school. These "enablers" represent the ideas, approaches, strategies and skills that "prime the pump" of school improvement and staff development programs.

CONCLUSION

This process model, "A Framework for Building Effective, Comprehensive School Improvement and Staff Development Programs" links school improvement with staff development. School improvement and staff development are interdependent. Schools cannot be improved without effective staff development programs. Successful improvement is accompanied by training directly related to the intended improvement. Likewise, staff development activities are most effective when related to school improvement programs.

Human growth, institutional change, professional growth and staff development are integral parts of school improvement. This model addresses the human and institutional dimensions of educational improvement, while recognizing the difference between individual improvement (professional development) and group training (staff development).

The school is the focus of school improvement and staff development. In the model the school is seen in the context of related educational institutions, as part of a system which has interdependent parts. Change is possible only with cooperation among all parts of the system.

Finally, a framework for building school improvement and staff development programs is described. This framework includes: (1) the identification of student needs (individual needs and learning styles, special needs, personal and social responsibility, esteem for self and others, critical thinking and independent judgement); (2) teaching skills (class room management, questioning, designing lessons to permit each student to make continuous progress at a rate appropriate to his or her ability, teaching to an objective, motivatir responding); (3) instructional strategies (inductive, inquiry, synetics, concept attainment, nondirective classroom meetings, role playing, simulation, direct training); (4) basic skills (language development, reading, writing, mathematics, speaking); (5) oth areas of the curriculum (arts, humanities, physical, natural and social sciences, multicultural education, consumer economics, career education); (6) special student needs (bilingual, compensatory, gifted, exceptional); (7) classroom and school environment (the relationships, motivation, intellectual stimulation, satisfaction and personal growth of students, teachers, administrators and parents); (8) the structure and organization of schooling (individual and group learning activities, time periods, materials); and (9) school-home-community partnerships.